### BSU Meistersingers and Vocal Jazz Choirs
#### Tour to Belgium and the Netherlands
**May 8 – May 17, 2017**

#### Itinerary

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<td><strong>Monday, May 8</strong></td>
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<td>Departure&lt;br&gt;Arrive at Boise Airport 3 hours in advance of departure time to check in for your overnight flights to Brussels, Belgium.</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, May 9</strong></td>
<td>Ghent</td>
<td>Welcome to Belgium! Claim luggage, clear Customs and Immigration and meet your English-speaking tour escort and private coach. Transfer to Ghent, your Belgium base for the next three nights. Ghent is the spiritual citadel of Flanders, a university town, a major Belgian port and a great industrial center. It is crisscrossed by canals and waterways, built as it is on numerous islets at the confluence of the River Leie and Scheldt. You'll have a brief orientation walk through the city center. Check in to hotel. Group dinner.</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday, May 10</strong></td>
<td>Antwerp/Ghent</td>
<td>Visit St. Bavo’s Cathedral. St. Bavo’s has a wealth of artwork to admire, most notably The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb by Jan Van Eyck. Known also as the Ghent Altarpiece, this amazing multi-paneled painting (completed in 1432) is considered one of the greatest works of Christian art ever produced. Continue to Antwerp, Belgium’s second city and biggest port. One of Europe’s most important commercial centers in the mid-16th century, it is still the “Diamond Capital of the World.” Antwerp was also home to baroque artist Pieter Paul Rubens. After lunch on your own, you’ll have a guided sightseeing tour. Possible informal concert in the beautiful Onze Lieve Vrouwe Kathedraal at the end of the tour. <strong>Concert</strong> in Antwerp or Ghent, perhaps shared with university choir.</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday, May 11</strong></td>
<td>Ghent</td>
<td>Half day excursion to the “City of Peace,” Ypres, one of the most powerful and flourishing Flemish towns in the 13th century, and gateway to Flanders Fields. You’ll tour the In Flanders Field Museum (named after the iconic WWI poem), showcasing</td>
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the history of WW I including the invasion of Belgium, 4 years of trench warfare, and the war’s end. Your visit continues to the **Tyne Cot British Cemetery**, site of one of the deadliest battles in recorded history, then to the Sanctuary Wood Museum, where a section of World War I trenches can still be seen near Hill 62. **Impromptu sing** possible at **The Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing**, dedicated to soldiers killed on these battlefields whose graves are unknown.

Continue to **Bruges**, dubbed the **Venice of the North** for its canal system. Most of its splendid medieval architecture is intact, leading UNESCO to declare the entire historic center a **World Heritage Site** in 2000. You’ll get a wonderful overview of the city on your canal cruise.

Return to Ghent for dinner and overnight.

**Friday, May 12**

Check out and transfer to Brussels, the European capital and home to the European Commission and the Council of Ministers of the European Union (EU), for a visit. Continue to the Netherlands’ southernmost province of Limburg, to **Maastricht**, the small but sophisticated capital city. Enjoy a sightseeing tour of the historic center aboard the tram and discover the oldest city of the Netherlands, established by Romans along the **Maas River** more than 2,500 years ago. At the crossroads of Latin and Germanic culture, Maastricht is nestled between Belgium and Germany. The **Treaty of Maastricht**, which established the euro as the sole form of currency for the nations of the European Union, was signed here in 1992.

Check in to your accommodations in Maastricht. Group dinner. **Concert** in a nearby town, perhaps shared with a local choir.

**Saturday, May 13**

Excursion today to **Aachen, Germany**, the original seat of Charlemagne’s Holy Roman Empire. You will visit the stunning **Cathedral**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the site of coronations for Holy Roman Emperors from 936 to 1531. During free time, explore the **Altstadt** (Old City), **Marktplatz**, and the 14th century **Rathaus** (Town Hall) built on the original site of Charlemagne’s palace. You may stop in **Margraten** and its American Cemetery (US soil), where all American victims of WW II who died in the Netherlands are buried. Pay respect here and possibly have a brief impromptu performance.

Return to Maastricht for group dinner and overnight.
Sunday, May 14  
**Homestays Kessel-Lo (BSU)** 
After breakfast, check out of your accommodations. Transfer to Kerkrade. Afternoon **concert** shared with local choir. Following the concert, transfer to Kessel-Lo, Belgium, and meet your host families (BSU arrangements).

Monday, May 15  
**Homestays Kessel-Lo (BSU)** 
Homestays, meals and possible concert (tbd) provided by your Kessel-Lo hosts (BSU arrangements). Coach and tour escort will remain with the group.

Tuesday, May 16  
**Amsterdam area** 
Thank you and goodbye to your Kessel-Lo hosts. Transfer to the Netherlands and your hotel close to Amsterdam’s Schiphol Airport. You may visit Utrecht or Amsterdam on your final day for your own explorations. **Festive Farewell Dinner** to celebrate your successful tour!

Wednesday, May 17  
**Return to US** 
Check out of your hotel and transfer to Amsterdam’s Airport for your return flights to Boise. **Welcome home!**

**Tour inclusions:**
- All arrangements for 3 concerts (CT arrangements) and 2 impromptus. Shared concerts will be considered where possible. Coordination for possible Kessel-Lo area concert (BSU arrangements).
- Round-trip group airfare from Boise (BOI) to Brussels (BRU) departing May 8, returning from Amsterdam (AMS) May 17, 2017.
- 4 nights in tourist-class hotels based on twin/triple rooms, all with private WC and bath or shower. 2 nights student hostel in multi-bedded rooms for student, twin rooms for faculty, shared bathrooms. Single rooms available for a surcharge. (Two nights homestays in Kessel-Lo, Belgium, arranged by BSU.)
- Meals basis: 6 breakfasts plus 6 main meals during hotel/hostel days, including a Farewell Dinner. (Meals during homestays not included.)
- Full-time English-speaking tour escort throughout, including Kessel-Lo homestays.
- Private, deluxe, air-conditioned coach and driver throughout (within EU regulations), including Kessel-Lo homestays.
- Local guide for city tour of Antwerp by coach.
- Half-day specialized guide in Ypres/Flanders.
- Canal cruise in Bruges.
- Tram tour through Maastricht historic center.
- Entrance fees: St. Bavo Cathedral in Ghent, Flanders Field Museum in Ypres, Aachen Cathedral.
- All group meal, coach and hotel taxes. Air taxes, fees and fuel surcharges are included at the rate at booking ($648) and are subject to change by the airline until ticketing. Increases will be passed on to group.